

# News Release

## New Jersey Meadowlands Commission



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### **NJMC and Hudson County Partner For Wetlands Restoration**

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission has announced a partnership with Hudson County and NY/NJ Baykeeper for a wetlands restoration project at Laurel Hill County Park in Secaucus.

“Healing our wetlands and allowing them to work for residents – in terms of protection from flooding and strengthening our common ecosystem – is something we have to pursue cooperatively if it is to stand the test of time,” said NJMC Chair Susan Bass Levin, also the state Department of Community Affairs Commissioner. “This project at Laurel Hill County Park provides us with a unique partnership that highlights the depth of this new spirit of environmental renewal that we are pursuing.”

Following the NJMC’s monthly board meeting April 26, the agency is providing an \$80,000 grant to Hudson County to design the Hackensack River Tidal Wetland Restoration Project. The County is providing \$50,000 to this project.

There are three components to the plan. The first part will be to restore up to 2 acres of shoreline at the park. The shoreline will be “softened” and replanted with new vegetation to attract fish and encourage catch-and-release fishing. The second phase will take place on 15 acres of wetlands the County will acquire from Jersey City. This land will be graded for appropriate tidal flow to encourage the growth of various marsh grasses to support more diverse wildlife. The final part will evaluate the boat launch facility that currently stands at Laurel Hill Park.

“We’re excited at this latest effort and partnership with the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission to further develop Laurel Hill Park and the waterways surrounding it,” said Hudson County Executive Thomas DeGise. “We look forward to partnerships like this in the future to improve the quality of life for all the residents of Hudson County.”

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As reported in the Strategic Review of the Meadowlands Master Plan released earlier this year, the NJMC acquired or preserved 987 acres of open space and began habitat enhancement on 1,027 acres. The goal over the next two years is to acquire or preserve 300 acres in most need of protection, and finish habitat enhancement on 100 acres.

“NY/NJ Baykeeper has been glad to assist Hudson County and New Jersey Meadowlands Commission in moving forward with natural restoration design plans for Hudson County's Laurel Hill Park along the Hackensack River,” said NY/NJ Baykeeper Executive Director Andrew Willner. “These plans are yet another step forward in preserving, improving and making the natural wonders of the Meadowlands region accessible to the public. Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise and the NJMC deserve great credit for their open space vision and for their project follow through.”

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